

Deer Creek Mine
North Rilda Extension

ACT/015/006
#2
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Decision Notice And Finding Of No Significant Impact

(Township 16 South, Range 7 East, Sections 20, 21, 28, and 29, Salt Lake Meridian)

USDA Forest Service, Intermountain Region
Manti-La Sal National Forest
Ferron/Price Ranger District
Emery County, Utah

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I. INTRODUCTION

The Manti-La Sal National Forest and Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Price Field Office have prepared an environmental assessment (EA) for a proposal submitted by Energy West Mining Company, Deer Creek Mine. The proposed action is for the cooperating agencies to allow Deer Creek Mine to conduct full extraction longwall mining and subside the escarpments on the north slope of Rilda Canyon by amending their mining and reclamation plan for the North Rilda Canyon vicinity. The Office of Surface Mining also participated as a cooperating agency. The area of the proposal lies on National Forest System lands administered by the Manti-La Sal National Forest, Ferron-Price Ranger District, Emery County, Utah in Township 16 South, Range 7 East, Sections 20, 21, 28, and 29, Salt Lake Meridian.

The preferred alternative for implementation is Alternative 2 (Proposed Action). Alternative 2 is detailed in the EA on page II-1. Alternative 2 would permit Deer Creek Mine to conduct full extraction, longwall mining beneath the Castlegate Escarpment on the north slope of Rilda Canyon, which would lead to surface subsidence and probable rockfalls.

To implement Alternative 2: the Forest Service would consent to, and the BLM would approve, a change to the Resource Recovery and Protection Plan (R2P2), and the Forest Service would consent to, and the Utah Division of Oil, Gas and Mining would approve the amendment to Deer Creek Mine's mining and reclamation plan.

II. DECISION

I have decided to implement Alternative 2 as described in the Environmental Assessment (EA, pp.II-1) and summarized in this document.

I consent to the modification of the R2P2 by the BLM, and consent to approval of the amendment of the Mining and Reclamation Plan by DOGM which would allow Energy West's Deer Creek Mine to conduct full extraction longwall mining and subside the escarpments in the north slope of Rilda Canyon as shown in Appendix A. Conditions of my consent are as follows:

1. Energy West will post warning signs at specified points in Rilda Canyon, warning recreational users of the potential rockfall hazards, as stated in their proposal.
2. All commitments in the mining and reclamation plan will be adhered to.
3. Energy West will also monitor subsidence through their mine plan requirements and provide higher resolution monitoring data for the north slope of Rilda Canyon by providing a complete photographic